

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 22, 2004

The Honorable J. Dennis Hastert
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232 Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204 Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Hastert and Leader Pelosi:

As bipartisan cosponsors of the Flu Protection Act (H.R. 3758), we are writing to ask you to schedule this essential legislation for consideration on the House floor while Congress convenes a special session next month.

This year's flu vaccine shortage, which is already resulting in long lines for vaccines, tremendous hardships for families throughout the country, and widespread fear among the elderly and other vulnerable populations, has clearly revealed the inadequacies of our current system for flu vaccine production. The recent announcement by Chiron that it may not be able to supply vaccine for the United States in 2005 should encourage us to take immediate action to prevent this shortage from endangering Americans again and to ensure that we are better equipped to face next year's flu season.

The Flu Protection Act offers incentives to encourage the creation of more vaccine companies with faster production times. It institutes greater cooperation between the government and vaccine manufacturers to provide a more accurate estimate on the number of vaccines needed each year. The bill also directs the CDC to develop a contingency plan in case of another shortage such as the one we are experiencing this year.

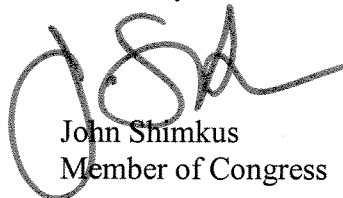
Though we understand that time will be limited during the November session, we can think of few more pressing responsibilities for this Congress than to do everything in our power to ensure that millions of Americans do not face next flu season unprotected. We are confident that passage of H.R. 3758 would be a good first step to that end.

Thank you for your consideration of our request. We look forward to working with you toward a timely, bipartisan solution to this critical problem.

Sincerely,



Rahm Emanuel
Member of Congress

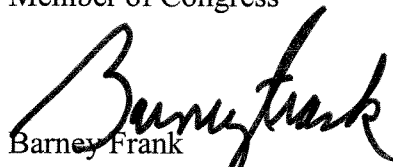



John Shimkus
Member of Congress

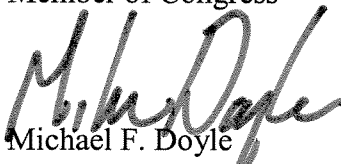


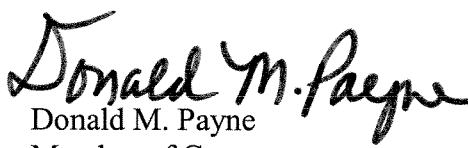
Diana DeGette
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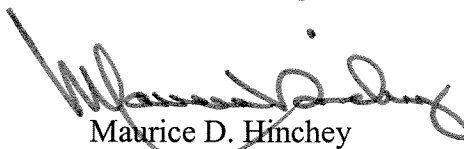

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Donald M. Payne
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Patrick J. Kennedy
Member of Congress

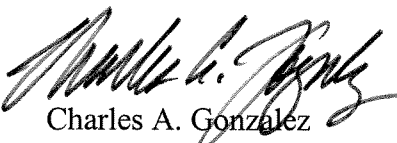

Vic Snyder
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Marion Berry
Member of Congress


Maurice D. Hinchey
Member of Congress

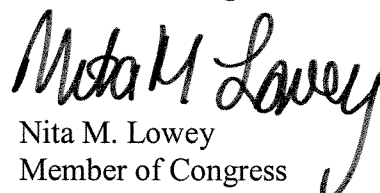

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